

SUMMARY OF A REPORT BY
FIELD STAFF REPRESENTATIVES OF
THE MUTUAL SECURITY AGENCY

Western Europe

This report places its major emphasis on the psychological reaction, particularly in Western Europe, to the shift in the main purpose of United States aid from economic recovery and development to military defense. This shift is considered to have had a number of important psychological results, generally adverse to United States interests. Certain conclusions concerning operations are drawn from analysis of the changed psychological situation, notably that United States propaganda operations are too conspicuously identified as such, and that, accordingly, development of covert propaganda is indispensable.

Chief among the psychological changes reported are the following:

(1) The closely related attitudes of political neutralism and anti-Americanism have increased in strength, particularly in France but also in the United Kingdom and other parts of Western Europe. Some of this sentiment reflects resentment over the presence of American troops and military bases; some of it reflects anxiety over the supposed "belligerency" of United States policy. It is pointed out that more Europeans this year than last (though still a minority) believe that, if a third World War occurs, America rather than Russia will be the aggressor.

(2) Whether sincerely or not, Europeans tend to attribute their current economic dislocations to United States rearmament policy, and increasingly question the ability of the European economy to sustain a further rearmament burden.

(3) The involvement of the European unity movement with the rearmament program, primarily through the EDC project, has become the main psychological obstacle to further progress toward European unification. In particular, it has directly contributed to the delay in implementation of the Schuman Plan.

(4) In the United Kingdom, a powerful Bevanite minority has emerged in the Labor party opposing the alleged subjection of Britain to United States foreign policy. Among its chief arguments are that the defense effort conflicts seriously with the social services, and that rearmament (particularly as applied to Western Germany) is likely to provoke war.

In summary, it is held that the European response to the rearmament policy constitutes a psychological obstacle to the purposes of United States aid to Europe and reduces the effectiveness of United States support of European unity. It is felt that many Europeans tend to ignore the basic purpose of the rearmament policy -- namely, to create a framework of security for the development and expansion of European economic and social standards begun under the Marshall Plan.

Operational measures taken to meet this situation include:

- (1) a reorientation of the MSA information output to give primary emphasis to NATO and military defense (including a special program in support of EDC ratification);
- (2) a great increase in the proportion of MSA informational activities which are channeled through European governmental and private groups (now as much as 80 or 90 per cent);
- (3) extensive MSA support of the NATO information program;
- (4) considerable progress toward the goal of full integration of MSA information operations with those of USIS in Europe, on both country and regional levels.

The report suggests the desirability of further steps along the following lines:

- (1) Full recognition among United States officials that the change from ECA economic aid to MSA defense aid has resulted in a change in the psychological climate in which United States aid operations must be carried out;

(2) Further development of the trend away from United States information activities overtly identified as such, and corresponding development of covert propaganda activities.

(3) Efforts to strengthen the propaganda effort of NATO, to the extent that the reluctance of European member governments permits this.

Soviet Orbit in Europe

Although no MSA activities are directed specifically at the Soviet Orbit, some MSA-supported radio broadcasting and other information activities in Western Europe reach into the Orbit countries.

The report suggests that the Marshall Plan had considerable psychological impact behind the iron curtain, where people appeared to feel that the "grass was growing greener on the other side of the fence" and communist propaganda had to combat this view. On the other hand, the shift of emphasis to military can be used by communist leaders as "confirmation" of their long-standing charge that the Marshall Plan masked aggressive intentions. However, the same signs of growing military strength may reassure those people in the Orbit countries who yearn for liberation.

Near East and Africa

MSA information activities in this area are limited to contributions to the work of the Franco-American Committee, which operates under the supervision of the Embassy. No evaluative comments on this activity are made in the report.

Southeast Asia and Korea

The chief obstacles to public acceptance of the United States and its objectives in these areas are listed as:

- (1) the history of the white man in Asia;
- (2) current United States commitments;
- (3) the unpopularity of some elements supported by the United States;
- (4) communications difficulties; and
- (5) illiteracy

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These factors increase the difficulty of identifying the United States with local aspirations rather than with imperialism. The United States is reported to be regarded generally as a defender of the status quo.

MSA and TCA social and economic aid programs are believed to generate some favorable opinion. On the other hand, it is felt that military aid is likely to have the opposite effect unless it is properly presented. As in Europe, communist propagandists in Asia have gained some credibility for their accusations by exploiting United States military aid programs.

The report makes the following suggestions:

(1) The United States psychological effort in this area should place greater emphasis on specific local problems, primarily social and economic; and should explain United States policies (including military aid) in terms which correspond closely to the immediate aims of the peoples involved.

(2) High priority should be given to public participation in national development, so that the masses become understanding and responsible participants rather than mere spectators.

(3) Aid in the area should be offered only on reasonable conditions to which adherence should be demanded. The importance of the East-West conflict should not result in adoption of the principle of "aid at any price".

(4) Equal emphasis with anti-communism should be given to positive democratic values, and firm criticism should be made of those in the area who abuse such values. No concessions should be made to the chauvinism and xenophobia of immature nations.

(5) United States propaganda in the area should not over-emphasize cultural affairs at the expense of political warfare.

(6) America's ability to "deliver the goods" should be emphasized, in contrast to the inability of the U.S.S.R. to do so.

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